

Slough Borough Council

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	Monday 21 st October 2024
Subject:	Adult Carers Strategy 2023 – 26 Annual Progress Report
Lead Member:	Cllr Anna Wright, Social Care and Public Health
Chief Officer:	David Coleman-Groom Executive Director, People Adults
Contact Officer:	Jane Senior, Director of Commissioning, People Adults Vanessa Pugh Interim Commissioner for Older People and Carers
Ward(s):	All
Key Decision:	YES
Exempt:	NO
Decision Subject To Call In:	YES
Appendices:	Appendix – Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 - 1 year update Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report asks Cabinet to note the progress of the Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26, which was approved at Cabinet in September 2023. The Strategy sets out how the Council, working with its partners and carers, will support and encourage carers to manage their own health and wellbeing, and ensure that that right support is known about and available at the right time. The 'Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 - 1 year update' is shown at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The aim of the strategy is to ensure that Slough is a place where carers can balance their caring roles with achieving a desired quality of life. Importantly, the Strategy seeks to minimise the negative impacts of caring upon health and wellbeing and prevent carer breakdown.
- 1.3 This will be through a range of initiatives set out within the Carers Strategy Action Plan. The Strategy has been informed by engagement and co-production with carers. The engagement confirmed that the carer's voice should be central to service development. Delivery of the Carers Strategy Action Plan contained within the Strategy is being overseen by a Carers Steering Group comprising carers, volunteers, the Co-production Network, Council officers and professional stakeholders including representatives from Frimley ICB. The co-chair of the steering group has lived experience of being a carer.

1.4 Delivery of Slough Adult Carers Strategy supports continuous improvements across Adult Social Care and meeting the Council’s CQC Assurance requirements.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:

Note the progress made during year 1 in the delivery of the Carers Strategy Action Plan as set out within the report at Appendix 1

Reason:

To ensure that tangible progress has been made with the delivery of the Carers Strategy Action Plan as set out within the of Slough Adults Carer Strategy 2023 – 26.

In doing so ensure that Carers in Slough are supported in their caring role and achieve positive outcomes. This progress update to Cabinet was co-produced with Carers Support, Slough.

Commissioner Review

Commissioners have reviewed the report and made no comment.

2. Report

Publishing the progress of the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 contributes to the following priorities:

Corporate Plan

A town where residents can live healthier, safer and more independent lives

- Working with partners to target health inequalities and promote wellbeing –
- Supporting residents to be as independent as possible whilst providing quality services for the most vulnerable.

Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25

Priority 2: Integration –

- Increase the number of people living independently at home and decrease the proportion living in care homes –
- Increase the number of people who are managing their own health and care needs.

2.1

Options considered

Options	Pros	Cons
Option 1 Deliver an annual progress update of the implementation of the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 in	Transparency accountability to, and oversight from Members in the delivery of	. None

line with its incorporated Action Plan. Recommended	a Cabinet approved Strategy. Opportunity to share more widely the positive progress which has been made at pace.	
Option 2 Do not update Cabinet of the progress in the implementation of the Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26. Not recommended	No clear advantage to not reporting on progress.	A missed opportunity to provide information concerning progress.

Option 1 is recommended

Background

The Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 was approved by Cabinet in September 2023 and provides an opportunity to deliver and strengthen the Adult Carers offer within the town - based upon evidence and information obtained through engagement. The Strategy sets out 6 key priorities for Adult Carers, aligned to intended Corporate Objectives (which went out to consultation). The priorities are to:

- Enable carers to access information and guidance to identify and recognise carers at an early.
- Promote carer awareness – including the valuable role they play and the challenges they face.
- Provide person centred support – to enable carers to manage their own health and wellbeing and to access the right support at the right time.
- Ensure that carers are viewed and listened to by professionals as experts in care.
- Support effective integration and partnership work – including co-production and ensuring that carer voice is central to any service development.

The Strategy contains an Action Plan setting out a range of initiatives which are being implemented to deliver against the priorities. This first annual report back to Cabinet seeks to note the progress a year on. It recognises the significant amount of work which has been undertaken to create a robust partnership framework to support the delivery of the Strategy. A Carers Steering Group meets on a quarterly basis which is Co-Chaired by the Interim Carers and Older People Commissioner and a Volunteer Carer. This oversees a number of Task & Finish Groups led by carers, officers and other stakeholders where Slough residents, providers and Council staff meet to develop and progress work through key priorities.

The top 3 priorities taken from the Adult Carers Strategy Action Plan for year one were agreed by the Steering Group and are being progressed through task and finish groups led by officers, partners and carers.

- **Priority 1** Enable carers to access information, advice and guidance
- **Priority 2** Identify and recognise carers at an early stage
- **Priority 6** Support effective Integration and partnership work – including co-production and ensuring that carers voice is central to any service development.

Year 1 has focused on engagement and co-production with individuals making up the membership of the Carers Steering Group.

A full summary of the highlights, challenges and progress against the action plan is included in the update report at appendix 1.

In brief, some of the key highlights for this year, include:

- Fully sponsored event at Ditton Manor
- Establishment of Carers Forum
- Successful bid of the Accelerated Reform Fund as part of an East Berkshire Consortium within the Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS)
- Working with Hope College to set up an unpaid male carers group in Slough, a gap identified in our Carers Strategy. Male Carers will meet regularly at a café in central Slough.
- In addition, the ASCOF / SACE data shows that there has been significant improvements in regard to carers in the town.

Some of the challenges include:

- Limited resource to progress the Strategy including the management of a dual commissioning portfolio of carers and older people.
- Some delays in recruiting to the Carers Support and Development Officer due to some TUPE complications when transferring the Carers Support Service back in house from the Slough Voluntary and Community Service.

A key event that has facilitated and augmented the delivery of action plan was the Carers Week Launch event in June 2024. This celebration of Carers Week aimed to appreciate and recognise the contribution of the immense unpaid carer workforce we have in Slough with 120 carers attending. We attracted our current network of carers along with new carers that had previously not engaged with the Council.

The event was supported by local organisations, including Ditton Manor who provided the venue free of charge for the event. . The Council were also supported by carers who volunteered their time in both the planning of the event and on the day. Local businesses also sponsored the event with food, dancing, laughing yoga, a magician and singing being provided free of charge.

The Council received significant positive feedback from carers and partners attending the Ditton Manor event. Some of the feedback from a wide range of sources from the Ditton Manor event can be found within the update report attached at Appendix 1.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

Whilst there are no financial implications directly relating to the publication of the update on the Carers Strategy. The Carers Strategy is funded through Slough Borough Council's general fund, reflected by current budgets. There are instances of identifying additional external funding through either the Better Care Fund, or external sponsorship. It is important that these opportunities are optimised to increase the funds available for the

implementation of the carers' strategy, as Council support is restricted by the value of available budget.

Any procurement activity arising out of the Action Plan will be subject to approval through the Council's Contract Procedures Rules and will only be authorised subject to the availability of budget.

3.2 Legal implications

3.2.1 This strategy is produced in accordance with the Care and Support Statutory Guidance and sets out the steps that the Council has taken and will take to (i) discharge its statutory obligations including general duties and specific duties to carers under the Care Act 2014 (ii) analyse local needs of carers and keep them under review (iii) shape the local market as well as establish joint working partnership with health partners and align its functions with the wider corporate planning.

3.3 Risk management implications

3.3.1

Risk	Assessment of Risk	Mitigation	Residual risk
One Commissioner covering both the Older People and Carers Portfolios and delays in recruitment to the Carers Support and Development Worker role mean that some actions are not able to be completed within the initial timeframes set and there may be further slippage against revised timeframes	Medium	New recruitment planned August/September 2024 to appoint a Commissioning Officer funded through the Accelerated Reform Grant using external funding to help support the delivery of the Strategy. The funding is from the Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) bid. More realistic timeframes now incorporated into the Strategy Action Plan.	Low/medium
Insufficient budget to support any commissioning intentions arising out of the Carers Strategy Action Plan.	High	Budget availability to be confirmed in advance of commencement of any particular commissioning project. Ensuring best value considerations.	Medium

		Robust analysis as part of project of effectiveness and efficiency of any existing current supply.	
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3.4 Environmental implications

3.4.1 There are no environmental implications

3.5 Equality implications

3.5.1 The implementation of the in house carers service and the delivery of the Carers strategic action plan demonstrates a positive impact for people with protected characteristics.

There is acknowledgement that Race as a protected characteristic requires additional consideration. Taken from the Equality Impact Assessment *“In Slough 44.6% of unpaid carers are from Asian ethnic groups and 40.4% are from White ethnic groups. 6.7% of unpaid carers are from Black ethnic groups and 5.6% are from other ethnic groups. Language and digital exclusion may be an issue for carers from this group. Not accessing resources due to cultural expectations is also possible. Carers in this groups may experience prejudice or discrimination. To address these issues our dedicated volunteers, including wellbeing friends and community champions will play a crucial role in supporting carers from various ethnic backgrounds facilitating effective communication and assisting carers in accessing community support services.”*

There are specific actions within the strategic plan that support people with protected characteristics, specifically regarding race and cultural barriers.

- All carers assessments include equalities info and ethnicity. SBC will be working with schools, GP surgeries, pharmacies, and faith groups to identify carers from the diverse community in Slough. SBC will also look at those carers that are ‘hidden’ due to digital exclusion or language barriers.
- To be discussed and developed in partnership with NHS (household project in Slough) faith groups, community connectors. Recruitment of community champions and wellbeing friends within community groups will be beneficial. The Carers Support & Development Officer to link with Age UK for LGBTQ+. Some data available of unpaid carers from diverse communities from 2021 Census.
- Plan to use SBC interpreter and translation service to help carers access support at events including provide translated and culturally sensitive materials. Signpost carers to digital technologies and apps that can translate information, ReachDesk is one example.
- Holding advice and information workshops in local trusted places like a mosque or gurdwara.
- Working with Hope College to set up an unpaid male carers group in Slough, a gap identified in our Carers Strategy. Male Carers will meet regularly at a café in central Slough

3.5.2 A full Equality Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 2 of this report.

3.6 Corporate Parenting Implications

3.6.1 There are no corporate parenting implications

3.7 Procurement implications

3.7.1 There are no procurement implications

3.8 Workforce implications

3.8.1 There are no workforce implications

3.9 Property implications

3.9.1 There are no property implications

4. Background Papers

Appendix – Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023 – 26 1 year update on carers strategy

Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment